The top 106 shortest-worst value Amiga games ever

Written by dreamkatcha. Any related videos, as always, can be found on my YouTube channel.

None of this would have been possible without the fantastic resources generously provided by immensely talented emulator authors, and communities such as Hall of Light, Lemon Amiga, Lemon 64, World of Spectrum, Moby Games, World of Longplays and Recorded Amiga Games. Thank you for your tireless dedication to preserving the history of gaming.

It's only when you start watching longplay game videos regularly that you realise just how short some of them truly are. It doesn't necessarily mean the games are easy to complete, or *everyone* would plough through them at the same breakneck pace, only that the player behind the joystick really knows what they're doing. Not that this qualifier should stop us compiling a ridiculously long-winded list of the worst offenders and gasping in astonishment - it's practically our civic duty.

So without further ado, I hereby present to you the top 106 countdown of the shortest Amiga games in the history of ever, as captured for posterity by three of the most venerable YouTube longplay channels; World of Longplays, hipoonios, and I am Ironclaw!

Rank	Game	Time to complete
106	Dragon Breed	0:19:58
105	The Lion King	0:19:47

104	Alien Syndrome	0:19:36
103	Rise of the Robots	0:19:35
102	Shadow of the Beast II	0:19:29
101	The Plague	0:19:06
100	New York Warriors	0:19:06
99	Altered Beast	0:19:02
98	Ali Baba	0:19:02
97	Street Fighter II	0:18:59
96	Shadow Dancer	0:18:47
95	Snoopy In 'The Case of the Missing Blanket'	0:18:46
94	Neighbours	0:18:46
93	Beast Busters	0:18:39
92	RoboCop	0:18:26
91	Master Axe - The Genesis of MysterX	0:18:18
90	Vigilante	0:18:10
89	Test Drive	0:18:03
88	Badlands	0:18:02
87	Bill & Ted's Excellent Adventure	0:17:59
86	Ghosts 'N' Goblins	0:17:52
85	Golden Axe	0:17:39
84	Budokan - The Martial Spirit	0:17:38
83	The Child Murderer	0:17:26
82	Barbarian II	0:17:25
81	Alcatraz	0:17:17
80	Lorna	0:17:05
79	Viz	0:16:52
78	Chambers of Shaolin	0:16:47
77	Capital Punishment	0:16:43
76	Cardiaxx	0:16:43

75	Space Harrier	0:16:37
74	Eliminator	0:16:29
73	Weird Dreams	0:16:09
72	Ikari Warriors	0:15:44
71	Psycho Santa	0:15:31
70	Tom & Jerry	0:15:27
69	Gem'X	0:15:24
68	Moonstone	0:15:23
67	Sly Spy - Secret Agent	0:15:22
66	Rise of the Robots	0:15:18
65	Demon Blue	0:15:16
64	Body Blows	0:15:15
63	Continental Circus	0:15:15
62	CJ's Elephant Antics	0:15:15
61	Army Moves	0:15:10
60	Postman Pat	0:15:07
59	Castle Warrior	0:14:57
58	Ghostbusters II	0:14:53
57	Roger Rabbit in Hare Raising Havoc	0:14:45
56	Clever & Smart	0:14:44
55	Garfield - Big, Fat, Hairy Deal	0:14:41
54	Thomas The Tank Engine 2	0:14:34
53	Paperboy	0:14:31
52	Viz - The Soft Floppy One	0:14:30
51	Goofy's Railway Express	0:14:12
50	Persian Gulf Inferno	0:14:06
49	Tin Toy Adventure	0:13:55
48	Home Alone	0:13:50
47	Out Run	0:13:40
46	Total Eclipse	0:13:34

45	NuclearWar	0:13:01
44	Powerstyx	0:12:58
43	Hunt For Red October	0:12:53
42	Thomas the Tank Engine	0:12:43
41	Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show	0:12:39
40	License To Kill	0:12:34
39	Terminator 2: Judgment Day	0:12:28
38	Terramex	0:12:01
37	Turbo Racer 3D	0:11:52
36	Strider	0:11:20
35	Hugo	0:10:59
34	Popeye 3 - WrestleCrazy	0:10:47
33	Zany Golf	0:10:29
32	Back To The Future III	0:10:27
31	ATAX	0:10:22
30	BoBo	0:10:06
29	Bomb Jack	0:09:46
28	American Gladiators	0:09:36
27	Star Wars	0:08:37
26	Ski or Die	0:08:33
25	Live and Let Die	0:08:27
24	The Karate Kid Part II	0:08:26
23	Barbarian	0:08:22
22	American Tag Team Wrestling	0:08:22
21	Oliver & Company	0:08:19
20	Manhattan Dealers	0:08:14
19	Ninja Mission (Arcadia coin-op)	0:07:44
18	Hostages	0:06:52
17	Corx	0:06:45
16	Marble Madness	0:06:04

15	BMX Simulator	0:05:56
14	The Sword And The Rose	0:05:47
13	Silverblade	0:05:43
12	Sooty & Sweep	0:05:09
11	Mean Machine	0:03:57
10	Belial	0:03:50
9	Dragon's Lair	0:03:46
8	Space Ace	0:03:39
7	Dragon's Lair III - The Curse of Mordread	0:03:34
6	Dragon's Lair II: Time Warp	0:03:34
5	Space Ace II: Borf's Revenge	0:02:44
4	Galaxy Fight	0:02:44
3	Mafdet and the Book of the Dead	0:02:23
2	Over the Net	0:02:05
1	Protector	0:01:30

Clocking in at a single measly minute and a half of play time, Protector from Virgin Mastertronic is therefore the runaway 'winner' of my hunt for the shortest commercial game released for the Amiga platform. Released in 1989, it's a two player, arcade action, helicopter shooter in the mould of Choplifter, only using a split screen perspective.
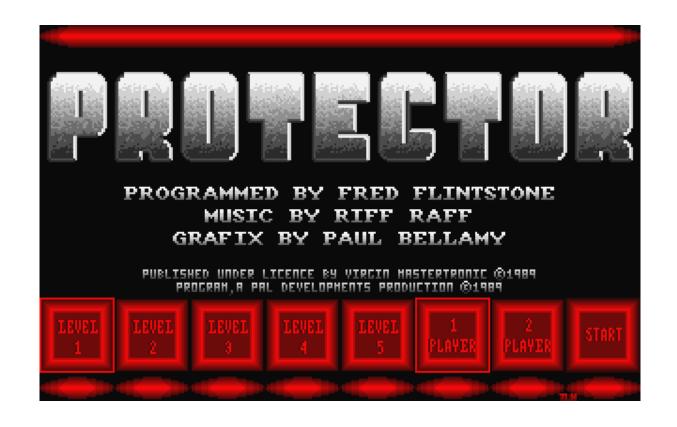
Playing as a rookie pilot in the US Army Helicopter Training School stationed at Fort Rucker you duke it out against the computer or a human chum. Your core objective is to collect the components of a bomb dotted around the desert landscape and deposit them in your base, simultaneously employed to refuel and restock your weaponry. Once assembled, the finished article can be dropped on your opponent's base to decimate it. You win, game over, congratulations etc.

Not so fast Hawke; while you misappropriate bomb-making paraphernalia from the enemy base, your nemesis does likewise, whilst attempting to blast you out of the sky with a 30mm Gatling cannon. It's a wonder every aerial skirmish doesn't descend into a never-ending stalemate of tit for tat pilfering.

Amiga Format awarded it a final score of 72%, Amiga Computing 34%, C&VG 23% and CU Amiga 72%. It's unclear who actually cobbled together Protector for Mastertronic because the commissioned PAL Development staff were apparently too embarrassed to associate their real names with the el cheapo offering. Interestingly, a different set of anonymous developers worked on the Atari ST version, albeit for Paul Bellamy, who confessed to creating the graphics. Even so, I happen to know the coder was Gary Antcliffe so there's that short-lived mystery solved.

PROTECTOR

PROGRAMMED BY BARNEY RUBBLE
MUSIC BY WILMA
GRAFIX BY DINO

PUBLISHED UNDER LICENCE BY VIRGIN MASTERTRONIC ©1989
PROGRAM, A PAL DEVELOPMENTS PRODUCTION ©1989

| LEVEL 1 | LEVEL 2 | LEVEL 3 | LEVEL 4 | LEVEL 5 | 1 PLAYER | 2 PLAYER | START |

PROTECTOR

PROGRAMMED BY FRED FLINTSTONE
MUSIC BY RIFF RAFF
GRAFIX BY PAUL BELLAMY

PUBLISHED UNDER LICENCE BY VIRGIN MASTERTRONIC ©1989
PROGRAM, A PAL DEVELOPMENTS PRODUCTION ©1989

| LEVEL 1 | LEVEL 2 | LEVEL 3 | LEVEL 4 | LEVEL 5 | 1 PLAYER | 2 PLAYER | START |

Falling into the budget title bracket - priced at £4.99 - it's nonetheless not the worst *value* Amiga game of all time, despite costing a relatively exorbitant five pence per second of gameplay. That dubious honour instead goes to ReadySoft's Space Ace II released in 1991, which - while taking a leisurely two minutes and forty-four seconds to complete - sold for an inflated retail price of £34.99 (or even £44.95 if you believe CU Amiga). Doing the maths that equates to an extortionate twenty-one pence per second of gameplay!

You know the score, these interactive, animated laser-disc conversion adventures are hardly obscure. It's Dragon's Lair in space from the same developer; five floppies worth of pretty visuals with non-existent gameplay. You watch a pre-rendered sequence, push the joystick to one side or the other and that triggers another cartoon. Drifting off you miss your cue to prod the joystick at the appropriate moment, and Dexter bites the dust as you're treated to one of a handful of half-baked death scenes. You'd be better off turning the Infanto-Ray on yourself, spending your £35 on whiskey and watching Fox Kids or CBeebies in a drunken stupor. Actually that sounds like fun, protest or not.

CU Amiga deemed it worthy of a somewhat less than out of this world 58%, Amiga Power awarded Space Ace II a wouldn't-spit-on-it-if-it-were-on-fire 17%, while Amiga Action - who weren't *quite* so insulted - dealt it a generous 63%.

To fathom out what all this boils down to I caught up with Captain Obvious in the midst of wrapping up a recreational narcotics awareness lecture entitled 'Drugs Are Bad, Kids'. Divulging a profoundly exhaustive analysis he informed me that really short games can be completed much, much faster than longer ones. This leaves you feeling ripped off, a bit miffed, and wondering why more developers didn't employ a designated quality control nerd.

Ah ha! I knew there would be a point to all this if I only dug deep enough, tapping the wisdom of industry expert insiders for clandestine clues.

A novel approach I've diligently nurtured over the years to skirt around this vexing dilemma is to become a totally inept gamer. As such, I never come close to finishing 99% of the games I play and therefore am none the wiser. And then

YouTube swaggered into my life shattering the illusion forever. From that moment on the phrase, "Oh, is that it?" would pass into my phone's word substitution lexicon to be grasped like the speed-dial number for The Samaritans.